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UNCLAS MUSCAT 001481

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/ARPI, NEA/PPD, NEA/P, INR/R/MR

LONDON FOR TSOU  
PARIS FOR ZEYA  
USCENTCOM FOR PLUSH  
FOREIGN PRESS CENTER FOR SILAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAN, THE SUPERPOWERS, AND PALESTINE

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Dangerous Games  
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1. The privately owned Arabic daily "al-Watan" published an editorial entitled "Could the Tug Of War Succeed In Politics?" on October 1:

"The tug of war between the West and the Islamic Republic of Iran over Tehran's nuclear program seems dangerous, but it might actually be a successful policy. Iran is holding a number of cards which it can play in the international political game. The most significant of these cards is the threat to stop oil production, leading to a hike in prices. Iran has also taken the daring step of declaring that it will not keep silent towards any country that exhibits aggression against the Iranian people or territory. In addition, Washington is well aware that Iran can pose a direct threat to American soldiers, particularly those operating in Iraq. These factors mean that the weaker parties will be able to balance the stronger parties in a tug of war."

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Freedom From Weapons  
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2. "Oman," the government-owned Arabic daily, ran an editorial on September 30 entitled "The Interests of the Superpowers":

"The Arabs have repeatedly called for keeping the Middle East as a nuclear weapons-free area. Rather than heeding these calls, the U.S. and other Western countries have focused on the nuclear programs in Iran and North Korea, while ignoring Israel's nuclear capability. The interests of the superpowers will always lie in keeping Israel as a strong state, well-equipped with the best weapons, despite the fact that Tel Aviv's aggression against the Palestinian people over the past 50 years makes it one of the bloodiest states in modern history... The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) does not possess the power to establish a nuclear arms-free zone in Asia, but it would be a great benefit to the whole world and to future generations of the Middle East could be kept free of such weapons."

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Five-Year Anniversary  
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3. On October 2, "al-Watan" featured an editorial under the headline "Five Years Of The al-Aqsa Upheaval":

"One of the lessons of the five-year-old intifadha is that even in an unbalanced fight, the use of force can sometimes hurt the enemy. History shows that wars of national liberation are won by inflicting damage upon the invaders and occupiers. However, there are certain and specific conditions for this use of force. First, it should serve a political goal, and second, it should be unanimously accepted by all local factions. In the Palestinian case, this means that all the Palestinian factions should come to an agreement specifying a common method of struggle that serves strategic and political goals."

BALTIMORE